

# **NATIONAL FIREARMS ACT OF 1938**

**52 STAT. 1250**

## [CHAPTER 850]

## AN ACT

To regulate commerce in firearms.

June 30, 1938  
[S. 3]

[Public, No. 785]

Federal Firearms  
Act.  
Definitions.  
"Person.""Interstate or for-  
eign commerce."

"Firearm."

"Manufacturer."

"Dealer."

"Licensed dealer."

"Crime of violence."

"Fugitive from jus-  
tice."

"Ammunition."

Unlawful acts.  
Transportation,  
etc., of firearms or  
ammunition without  
license.Knowingly receiv-  
ing same.Transportation, etc.,  
to other than licensed  
manufacturer or dealer.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That as used in this Act—*

(1) The term "person" includes an individual, partnership, association, or corporation.

(2) The term "interstate or foreign commerce" means commerce between any State, Territory, or possession (including the Philippine Islands but not including the Canal Zone), or the District of Columbia, and any place outside thereof; or between points within the same State, Territory, or possession (including the Philippine Islands but not including the Canal Zone), or the District of Columbia, but through any place outside thereof; or within any Territory or possession or the District of Columbia.

(3) The term "firearm" means any weapon, by whatever name known, which is designed to expel a projectile or projectiles by the action of an explosive and a firearm muffler or firearm silencer, or any part or parts of such weapon.

(4) The term "manufacturer" means any person engaged in the manufacture or importation of firearms, or ammunition or cartridge cases, primers, bullets, or propellant powder for purposes of sale or distribution; and the term "licensed manufacturer" means any such person licensed under the provisions of this Act.

(5) The term "dealer" means any person engaged in the business of selling firearms or ammunition or cartridge cases, primers, bullets or propellant powder, at wholesale or retail, or any person engaged in the business of repairing such firearms or of manufacturing or fitting special barrels, stocks, trigger mechanisms, or breach<sup>1</sup> mechanisms to firearms, and the term "licensed dealer" means any such person licensed under the provisions of this Act.

(6) The term "crime of violence" means murder, manslaughter, rape, mayhem, kidnaping, burglary, housebreaking; assault with intent to kill, commit rape, or rob; assault with a dangerous weapon, or assault with intent to commit any offense punishable by imprisonment for more than one year.

(7) The term "fugitive from justice" means any person who has fled from any State, Territory, the District of Columbia, or possession of the United States to avoid prosecution for a crime of violence or to avoid giving testimony in any criminal proceeding.

(8) The term "ammunition" shall include all pistol or revolver ammunition except .22-caliber rim-fire ammunition.

SEC. 2. (a) It shall be unlawful for any manufacturer or dealer, except a manufacturer or dealer having a license issued under the provisions of this Act, to transport, ship, or receive any firearm or ammunition in interstate or foreign commerce.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to receive any firearm or ammunition transported or shipped in interstate or foreign commerce in violation of subdivision (a) of this section, knowing or having reasonable cause to believe such firearms or ammunition to have been transported or shipped in violation of subdivision (a) of this section.

(c) It shall be unlawful for any licensed manufacturer or dealer to transport or ship any firearm in interstate or foreign commerce to any person other than a licensed manufacturer or dealer in any State the laws of which require that a license be obtained for the purchase of such firearm, unless such license is exhibited to such manufacturer or dealer by the prospective purchaser.

<sup>1</sup> So in original.

(d) It shall be unlawful for any person to ship, transport, or cause to be shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce any firearm or ammunition to any person knowing or having reasonable cause to believe that such person is under indictment or has been convicted in any court of the United States, the several States, Territories, possessions (including the Philippine Islands), or the District of Columbia of a crime of violence or is a fugitive<sup>1</sup> from justice.

Shipment to person under indictment, etc.

(e) It shall be unlawful for any person who is under indictment or who has been convicted of a crime of violence or who is a fugitive<sup>1</sup> from justice to ship, transport, or cause to be shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce any firearm or ammunition.

Shipment by person under indictment, etc.

(f) It shall be unlawful for any person who has been convicted of a crime of violence or is a fugitive<sup>1</sup> from justice to receive any firearm or ammunition which has been shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce, and the possession of a firearm or ammunition by any such person shall be presumptive evidence that such firearm or ammunition was shipped or transported or received, as the case may be, by such person in violation of this Act.

Receipt by person convicted of crime of violence, etc.

(g) It shall be unlawful for any person to transport or ship or cause to be transported or shipped in interstate or foreign commerce any stolen firearm or ammunition, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe, same to have been stolen.

Transportation of stolen firearms, etc.

(h) It shall be unlawful for any person to receive, conceal, store, barter, sell, or dispose of any firearm or ammunition or to pledge or accept as security for a loan any firearm or ammunition moving in or which is a part of interstate or foreign commerce, and which while so moving or constituting such part has been stolen, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe the same to have been stolen.

Traffic in stolen firearms.

(i) It shall be unlawful for any person to transport, ship, or knowingly receive in interstate or foreign commerce any firearm from which the manufacturer's serial number has been removed, obliterated, or altered, and the possession of any such firearm shall be presumptive evidence that such firearm was transported, shipped, or received, as the case may be, by the possessor in violation of this Act.

Transportation of firearms from which serial number has been removed.

SEC. 3. (a) Any manufacturer or dealer desiring a license to transport, ship, or receive firearms or ammunition in interstate or foreign commerce shall make application to the Secretary of the Treasury, who shall prescribe by rules and regulations the information to be contained in such application. The applicant shall, if a manufacturer, pay a fee of \$25 per annum and, if a dealer, shall pay a fee of \$1 per annum.

Licenses, application, fee.

(b) Upon payment of the prescribed fee, the Secretary of the Treasury shall issue to such applicant a license which shall entitle the licensee to transport, ship, and receive firearms and ammunition in interstate and foreign commerce unless and until the license is suspended or revoked in accordance with the provisions of this Act: *Provided*, That no license shall be issued to any applicant within two years after the revocation of a previous license.

Issuance.

(c) Whenever any licensee is convicted of a violation of any of the provisions of this Act, it shall be the duty of the clerk of the court to notify the Secretary of the Treasury within forty-eight hours after such conviction and said Secretary shall revoke such license: *Provided*, That in the case of appeal from such conviction the licensee may furnish a bond in the amount of \$1,000, and upon receipt of such bond acceptable to the Secretary of the Treasury he may permit the licensee to continue business during the period of the appeal, or should the licensee refuse or neglect to furnish such bond, the Secre-

*Proviso.*  
Issuance after revocation.

Revocation on conviction of licensee.

*Proviso.*  
Temporary continuance; bond.

<sup>1</sup> So in original.